Single Scheme Administration Project
Quarterly Bulletin – Issue 13
June 2019

An Roinn Caiteachais
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform

Welcome

Welcome to the thirteenth quarterly bulletin of the Single Scheme Administration Project. This bulletin aims to share relevant information with all administrators involved in the operation of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme.

This edition includes:

- an update on recent policy developments and associated additions to the resources available on the Single Scheme website;
- information on our recent Single Scheme Town Hall event;
- An update on the Single Scheme Databank which is shortly due to commence onboarding Wave 1 Relevant Authorities;
- Information on recently completed and planned Single Scheme Training Workshops.

Single Scheme Policy Developments

Circular 12 of 2019 – Vesting

DPER Circular 12 of 2019 "*Guidance on the Vesting Period in the Single Public Service Pension Scheme*" issued to all Relevant Authorities on 30 May. This Circular provides clarification on the measurement and operation of the vesting period in the Single Scheme. In particular, **this Circular clarifies the treatment of paid / unpaid leave, atypical employments and simultaneous employments in measuring a Single Scheme member's progress towards completing the Scheme 24 month vesting period.** An amended Scheme Vesting Calculation Tool can be accessed on our website **here**.

Circular 15 of 2019 – Purchase and Transfer

DPER Circular 15 of 2019 "*Purchase and Transfer of Retirement Benefits under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme*" issued to all Relevant Authorities on 12 June along with the associated regulations made under S.I. No. 252 of 2019. This Circular provides details of the Single Scheme purchase facility which is due to come into effect from **1 October 2019.** This Circular also provides a means for potentially facilitating the transfer of pension benefits held by a member employed *outside of the public service* while a member of a Revenue approved pension arrangement.

A **Purchase & Transfer administrator toolkit** can be accessed on our website **here**. **Scheme members** can be directed to an online Purchase Cost Calculation Tool **here**.

Both circulars can be accessed on the Circulars & Legislation page of the Single Scheme website. Any queries on the content or application of these Circulars should be emailed to singleschemequeries@per.gov.ie, quoting your RA Number in the subject title and ensuring that any personal data is fully anonymised.

National Implementation Steering Committee

Oonagh Buckley, D/Justice (Chair);
Colin Menton, D/PER (SRO);
Peter Brazel, D/PER;
Teresa Cody, D/Health;
Des Dowling, D/Defence;
Eithne Fox, HSE;
Deirdre McDonnell, D/Education & Skills;
Doncha O'Sullivan, D/Justice;
Emma Reeves, D/Housing;
John Ryan, NSSO

DPER Project Team
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Updated Administrator FAQ document

An **updated version** of the Administrator FAQ document was published on
19 June and can be accessed **here**.

This version incorporates new content to reflect:

- recent issue of above **Circulars** in relation to **Vesting** and
  Purchase/Transfer
- additional guidance based on technical considerations of queries
  received by DPER or discussed at training events and project
  workshops
- DPER's consideration of issues considered by the Health Calculations
  Working Group

A significant majority of the queries received by DPER are fully addressed in
the published online resources made available to support Relevant
Authorities in their administration of member benefits. *Administrators are
reminded that they should please always refer in the first instance to the
published online resources where a technical query arises.*

Town Hall Event on 18 June

Thank you to everyone who attended the Single Scheme Town Hall event held
in Dublin on the 18 June. Almost 300 people attended, indicating the high level
of interest in the topics presented, which included:

- An overview of recent project progress;
- An update on Databank Onboarding (see below);
- An outline of the Pensions Authority role and responsibilities;
- An overview of the Actuarial Review of Public Service Pensions, which
  will involve a data request being issued to all public service bodies in
  the next few weeks;
- Details on the Single Scheme Purchase/Transfer Policy.

All of the material presented on the day can be accessed on the Single Scheme website **here.**

If any attendees would like to share feedback on the Town Hall event, please refer to the email issued by the project
team on 19 June which includes a survey link. **Closing date for responses is Fri 28 June.**

Single Scheme Databank

As noted at the recent Town Hall event (details above), the Single Scheme Databank is due to go live in the coming weeks and, once operational, bodies will be onboarded in waves.

Two data templates (Scheme Files) must be populated and uploaded to the Databank for **each Relevant Authority** for **each year:**

- a Membership Data File; and
- a Benefits Payment Data Scheme File

The **final versions** of these data templates, and associated resources, were circulated by e-mail to all relevant authorities on 28 May. These may be accessed at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie/databank, the content of which will be further enhanced in the coming weeks once the Databank goes live including the publication of a Databank Privacy Notice. **At this time, all bodies should be continuing to progress the preparation of Scheme Files for each year since 2013 pending a request from DPER to onboard to the Databank.**

The project team has had initial engagements with all bodies that have kindly agreed to participate in wave 1 in advance of the scheduling of Databank training. *If you are interested in your organisation being considered for onboarding to the Databank in an early wave, please make contact with us by emailing singleschemequeries@per.gov.ie.*
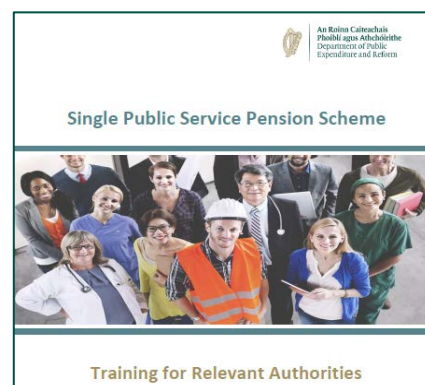
Training Workshops

The Project Team completed delivery of 12 Single Scheme Training Workshops covering **Modules B&C**: *Leaving Single Scheme Employment and Annual Administration Activities* and **Module A**: *Recruitment and Onboarding* activities over March to May. Training was delivered to a total of 251 attendees from 125 Relevant Authorities. Copies of the material can be found **here**.

The Project Team is currently planning what training modules will be re-run in Q3/Q4 2019. **If your organisation requires existing or new members of staff to attend any of the training modules,** please advise which modules are of interest and desired number of places, by emailing singleschemequeries@per.gov.ie.

Please note that places on each module will only be allocated to those individuals who have not already attended that specific training module.

For further information or to be added to/removed from the circulation list, please email singleschemequeries@per.gov.ie. For technical queries, please consult with online resources or a senior colleague prior to raising a query. Please include your Relevant Authority identification number in any correspondence and **ensure that any personal member data is fully anonymised.**